

# WHAT IS CDF?

**MISSION:** The Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) protects the people of California from fires, responds to emergencies, and protects and enhances forest, range, and watershed values providing social, economic, and environmental benefits to rural and urban citizens.



CDF is an emergency response and resource protection agency: protecting lives, property and natural resources from fire, responding to emergencies of all types, and protecting and preserving our timberlands, wildlands, and urban forests. The Department's varied programs work together - using ongoing assessments of the condition of our natural resources and challenges of an increasing population to plan protection strategies for California. CDF personnel and equipment are familiar sights throughout the State with responsibility for protecting over 31 million acres of California's privately-owned wildlands, and providing emergency services of all kinds through local government agreements within 35 of California's 58 counties.

## FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

CDF responds to an average of 6,300 wildland fires that burn nearly 144,000 acres each year. In addition, Department personnel respond to more than 286,000 other emergencies including everything from structure fires to automobile accidents, medical aids of all types to swift water rescues, civil disturbances to searching for lost hikers, hazardous material spills to train wrecks, and floods to earthquakes - the list is endless.



Because of CDF's size and major incident management experience, the Department is often asked to assist or take the lead in disasters, including the Northern and Central California floods of 1997 and 1998, the 1994 Northridge earthquake in Southern California, the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area, and the 1991 Tunnel Fire in the Oakland/Berkeley Hills.



**The Best Personnel and Equipment:** CDF covers the State with 21 administrative units, 634 fire stations (229 state and 405 local government), 40 conservation camps, 13 air attack, and nine helitack bases. The heart of CDF's emergency response and resource protection capability is a force of 3,800 full-time fire professionals, foresters, and administrative employees; 1,400 seasonal firefighters; 5,600 local government volunteer firefighters; 2,600 Volunteers In Prevention; and 4,300 inmates and wards. To transport and support these forces, CDF operates over 1,050 fire engines (370 state and 689 local government), 105 rescue squads, 13 aerial ladder trucks, 60 bulldozers, five mobile communication centers, and 11 mobile kitchen units. The Department funds, via contract, an additional 82 engines and 12 bulldozers in six counties – Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Orange, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. From the air, CDF operates 16 1,200-gallon airtankers, 7 800-gallon airtankers, nine helicopters, and 13 air attack planes.



**The Highest Standards of Training:** The State Fire Training and Education Program provides training education and certification programs to the California Fire Service. Through practical training exercises and classroom courses, every California firefighter is exposed to training standards that have been approved by CDF and the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), each known to be among the best institutions in the nation for fire training education.



Offering more than 1,000 classes annually, State Fire Training programs reach over 24,000 students each year, and have issued more than 100,000 certifications to members of the more than 900 California fire departments, including CDF.

**Cooperation Among Agencies:** In a state as large and populated as California, no one emergency response agency can do it all. That is why cooperative efforts via contracts and agreements between state, federal, and local agencies are essential to respond to emergencies like wildland and structure fires, floods, earthquakes, hazardous material spills, and medical aids. Because of these types of cooperative efforts you may see fire engines and crews from many different agencies at the scene of an emergency.



**Enforcing the Laws:** To enforce state fire and forest laws, CDF investigators determine wildland fire causes, interview witnesses, issue citations and set up surveillance operations. Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) arson and bomb specialists provide services to state-owned facilities, and local government fire and law enforcement agencies. Department investigators have a very successful conviction rate.



## OFFICE OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL

A part of the CDF team since 1995, the Office of the State Fire Marshal supports the protection of life and property through engineering, enforcement and education.

**Preventing fires:** The OSFM provides for fire safety where people live, work and congregate. State Fire Marshal staff enforce fire-related laws and codes in state-owned or operated buildings, adopt minimum building and fire safety regulations for use in all occupancies throughout the State, license

those who inspect and service fire extinguishers, regulate the use of flame retardants, evaluate building materials against fire safety standards, approve fireworks devices, license pyrotechnicians, operate the National Fire Incident Reporting System, and regulate hazardous liquid pipelines that run throughout the State.



## FORESTRY

CDF's mission emphasizes the management and protection of California's natural resources; a goal that is accomplished through ongoing assessment and study of the State's natural resources and a variety of resource management programs.

**Managing Timber and Fuels:** CDF oversees enforcement of California's forest practice regulations which guide timber harvesting on state and private lands. Department foresters review an average of 800 Timber Harvesting Plans (THPs) and do over 7,500 site inspections each year. THPs are submitted by timber landowners who want to harvest their trees. The reviews and inspections ensure protection of watershed and wildlife, as well as renewal of timber resources. Department foresters and fire personnel work closely to encourage and implement fuels management projects to reduce the threat of uncontrolled wildfires. Vegetation management projects such as "controlled burns" take teamwork between foresters, firefighters, landowners, and the local communities. CDF manages eight Demonstration State Forests that provide for commercial timber production, public recreation, and forest research and demonstration of good forest management practices. CDF foresters can be found in urban areas working to increase the number of trees planted in our cities or preventing the spread of disease by identifying and removing infected trees. A Native American burial ground in the path of a logging operation or fire may be verified and saved due to a CDF archeologist's review of the area. And, an improved strain of trees, resistant to disease and pests, may be nurtured and introduced by a CDF forester working at one of the Department's two forest nurseries.

